



2014 Competitive AmeriCorps State Technical Assistance FAQ

This FAQ contains information pertaining to the 2014 Montana AmeriCorps Competitive Request for Proposal (RFP). AmeriCorps State Grants are funded by the Corporation for National and Community Service (CNCS) through the Montana Governor's Office of Community Service (OCS).

Technical assistance will be available to applicants from October 7 to November 12, 2013. Questions should be submitted via email to serve@mt.gov. All questions and answers will be posted publicly in the FAQ document on the ServeMontana website at <http://serve.mt.gov/funding/>. Questions will be dated with the most recent added to the top. It is highly recommended that applicants read through all materials including the FAQ, application instructions, performance measure instructions, and full Notice of Funding.

October 16, 2013

Question: Do we need to find evidence that each output will result in the desired short, medium and long-term outcomes. Or would it be sufficient to find evidence that each output will result in the desired short-term outcome and separate evidence that shows the short-term will lead to the medium and long-term outcomes?

Answer: There is not guidance available on this. We will forward this question to CNCS when they re- open.

Question: Under the heading 'outputs', are they looking for quantifiable target numbers in this section? Or does 'direct products' imply that a qualitative answer would suffice as evidence of project implementation and participation?

Answer: Outputs should be quantifiable.

October 15, 2013

Question: Is it allowed or advisable to format/edit/alter the Logic Model Chart to include more information?

Answer: No, it is not advisable to edit the logic model.

Question: Are program currently funded through formula grants considered new applicants in competitive?

Answer: No, programs funded through competitive are not considered new.

Question: Is there any additional information available on the 21st Century Civilian Service Corps (21 CSC) and how that will be connected to AmeriCorps through this application?

Answer: The last guidance we received from CNCS prior to the shutdown was that there would be a separate notice posted for programs related to the 21 CSC initiative.

Question: Are there any partners from whom Letters of Commitment are required with the application?

Answer: Based on the last guidance we received there are no required Letters of Commitment. Applicants should consider strategically who their partners on the grant are and how a letters of support from those programs may improve their application. It is also a consideration that if a

significant partner is listed in the grant narrative but does not supply a letter of support the application may be viewed as incomplete.

Question: If the federal government shutdown lasts for an extended period of time will there be a change in the way applications must be submitted?

Answer: At this time it is not possible to open this funding opportunity for applications in eGrants. Given the case of an extended federal government shutdown applicants will be required to submit grant narratives via email.

October 10, 2013

Question: Are the parts of the application that are to be entered in eGrants also required to be submitted as attached documents in an email to serve.mt.gov? Or is it solely the Logic Model Worksheet, Organizational Chart, and Letters of Commitment from most significant community partners that should be submitted as attached documents to an email to serve.mt.gov?

Answer: Anything that can be entered in eGrants only needs to be submitted via eGrants. You do not need to email the application, performance measures, budget, etc. The only materials that must be submitted via email at the November 11 due date, because they cannot be entered into eGrants, are the Logic Model Worksheet, Organizational Chart, Cover Letter and Letters of Commitment.

Question: Do two projects need to have overlap in all six criteria stated on page 22 of the RFP to be considered the same project? Or are they considered the same if they qualify any of the criteria listed?

Answer: Determination as to whether two projects qualify as the same project will have to be made by a CNCS program officer. Given that CNCS program officers are not currently available it is our advisement that applicants who would identify with any of the criteria stated on page 22 complete all the steps required to apply for the "same project".

Question: If a determination as the "same project" standing of a proposal from CNCS program officers is unobtainable due to a lapse in government funding, may the state commission grant approval of programs inquiring as to whether they are considered a new project?

Answer: No, state commission staff will not be able to make a final determination as to whether a project is the "same project" as one previously funded.

October 9, 2013

Question: Do continuation applications need to develop and submit the Logic Model Worksheet?

Answer: At this time our interpretation of the Notice posted by CNCS is that continuation applicants are not required to submit a Logic Model Worksheet. If CNCS clarifies that the Logic Model Worksheet is a required part of the continuation application OCS will set a new, separate deadline for its submission.

Question: Pages 22-23 describe the "Assessment of Continuation Applications" scoring criteria. Beyond addressing these items in the continuation narrative, are there other items that OCS and CNCS that need to be addressed within the continuation narrative section? For example, given changes in the application format, are continuation applicants required to address items not previously part of the

narrative (i.e.: evidence-based description of how proposed intervention leads to outcomes, theory of change, etc.)

Answer: Beyond what is stated in the Assessment of Continuation Application section the continuation narrative should address any significant changes in the program. Significant changes in the program may include changes to host sites or focus of the program, anything that is a notable deviation from the activities described in the original grant narrative.

Continuation applicants are not required to address any new narrative areas required for new and recompeting grantees.

October 8, 2013

Question: What is the definition of a new applicant for this RFP?

Answer: From the definitions starting on page 29 of the RFP:

New applicants are those that have never had AmeriCorps State and/or National funding before. Current and former formula grantees are not new.

Question: How might the federal government shutdown affect this RFP?

Answer: While there is not an official answer to this question from CNCS here are two thoughts we will offer:

- 1) At the time of the shutdown the Notice of Funding Opportunity posted by CNCS was in draft status. It was indicated that revisions would not be substantive and would be strictly for clarification. But, there is the possibility that some of the changes could impact this RFP
- 2) The timeline for this RFP is based on the assumption that the shutdown will be relatively short term and that deadlines for submission at the federal level will not be amended. The deadlines stated in this RFP may be subject to change dependent on the length of the outcome and decisions made at the federal level.
- 3) As of this date it is not possible to open the application in eGrants.